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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO.

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INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

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COUNTRY Germany (Soviet Zone)

DATE DISTR. 17 April 1950

SUBJECT Zerbst Airfield

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1. The Zerbst (M 52/D 98) airfield was observed from its western and northern borders on 7 February 1950. Visibility was 8 kilo-meters and the ceiling was 400 meters. The following aircraft types were observed:

a. Jet fighters similar to conventional fighters, fitted with one turbine, air intake nose, air exhaust below fuselage in line with trailing edge of wings, low-wing monoplane, tapering wings, rounded wing tips, nose wheel, long cockpit for a crew of two in tandem beginning at leading edge of wings, rod antenna on rear section of cockpit, slanting to the rear, aircraft apparently of composite construction, Pitot tube on left wing, painted blue-green.

b. Jet fighter fitted with one turbine, air intake in nose, air exhaust at tail, wings with pronounced sweep-back and set almost at center of fuselage, landing gear retracting inward, nose wheel, very slim fuselage, short streamlined cockpit over root of leading edge of wings, antenna rod at rear end of cockpit, Pitot tube on left wing, rudder assembly over tail, swept-back elevator assembly set at upper section of rudder assembly, painted silvery, allmetal construction.

c. Piston-powered fighter. No details available because of the great distance from which it was seen.

2. The exact number of aircraft parked at the field could not be determined. The following aircraft were seen at 3 p.m.: A jet fighter of type a, 13 jet fighters of type b, and 30 to 40 conventional fighters of type c. The tail assemblies of two more jet fighters of type b were seen near the hangars; these planes, however, were painted a dark color. A jet fighter of type a took off at 2 p.m., made a half circle around the field, disappeared for a short time in the clouds and landed after about 5 minutes. Other take-offs were not observed. Only five jet fighters of type b were seen at the field at 4 p.m. All the other aircraft had been towed to the hangars.

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3. The previously observed mobile radio station was still at its former site. It was connected to the power transmission line by a cable. Only the two radio trucks were seen but not the radio set itself. [redacted]

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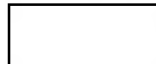
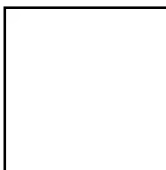
Trucks

Passenger Cars

Tank Trucks

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Truck [redacted] proceeding to the railroad station, was occupied by about 25 air force officers and 21 with their baggage. One of the officers asked about the trains to Brandenburg (H 53/Z 23).

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4. [redacted] there was intensive flying with jet aircraft at the field on 18, 19 and 31 January and 4 February 1950. Groups of 15 to 20 men were frequently shipped to Brandenburg.

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5. An estimated three fighter squadrons equipped with conventional aircraft, and two other squadrons, each equipped with two different types of jet aircraft were stationed at the Zerbst airfield on 8 February 1950. The smaller jet fighter type was about the size of a piston-powered fighter plane, the air exhaust was set below the cockpit, the speed was not much greater than that of a conventional fighter. The larger jet fighter type had only one turbine with its exhaust at the tail, its rudder assembly was set rather high, it was a swept-back design and had a mounted glass cockpit. This type plane had a very good rate of climb at take-off.

6. Flying has recently been done almost exclusively with the two jet fighter types. The Zerbst air unit probably was being retrained with jet aircraft, since groups of 15 to 20 men were continually seen at the take-off point. Formation flying in groups of two planes and local flights were practiced. Two mobile radio stations were observed; one of them stood on the Zerbst-Dobritz (H 53/E 09) road, the other one north of the field in a patch of woodland near the Zollmuehle.

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Comment:

a. The description of the two jet fighter types agrees with data previously received. The type designation of the two planes is not known. The type described in para 1a is presumably a Yak design.

b. According to available information, two fighter regiments assigned to two different divisions are assumed to be stationed at the field. Para 5, concerning the presence of 7 squadrons, is therefore credible. Both regiments probably have a total of 8 squadrons. The assumption that two regiments

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are stationed in Zerbst is supported by the presence of two mobile radio stations. In addition to the conventional fighters a total of about 60 jet planes is assumed to be stationed at the field.

c. The troop movements mentioned in para 3 are probably explained by the fact that the fighter regiment stationed in Brandenburg-Lriebst belongs to the same fighter division as one of the two regiments in Zerbst.

(The numeral designation of this division is unknown)

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